

MINUTES
MICHIGAN STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MEETING
July 19, 2002
Mt. Pleasant, Michigan

Meeting noticed in accordance with Open Meetings Act, Public Act 267 of 1976.

Present: Barton LaBelle, Chairman
 Ted Wahby, Vice Chairman
 Betty Jean Awrey, Commissioner
 Lowell Jackson, Commissioner
 John Garside, Commissioner
 C. Robert Baillod, Commissioner

 Charles Krupka, Commission Advisor
 Jerry Jones, Commission Auditor
 Vickie Plummer, Executive Secretary
 Pat Isom, Assistant Attorney General
 Greg Rosine, Director
 Barb Hayes, Chief Administrative Officer
 Philip Kazmierski, Bureau of Urban and Public Transportation

A list of those people who attended the meeting is attached to the official minutes.

Chairman LaBelle called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. in the Chippewa Conference Center, Comfort Inn University Park, Mt. Pleasant, Michigan.

PRESENTATIONS

Middle Michigan Development Corporation

George Dunn, President of Middle Michigan Development Corporation (MMDC), addressed the following concerns regarding M-20 and US-127 traffic improvements. MMDC supports initiatives by Midland County and the City of Midland to reroute M-20 to preclude it from going through the center of Midland, and recommended M-20 be widened west of Mt. Pleasant, extending to M-66, with an additional passing lane constructed on the south side of the highway beginning at Coldwater Road extending east toward Mt. Pleasant.

Mr. Dunn furthered that the Mt. Pleasant Urban Area Traffic Master Plan has identified the following traffic needs for BR-127. The north entrance into the city of Mt. Pleasant should be realigned to accommodate a 90-degree intersection with a traffic signal, and a traffic signal should be installed at the south entrance onto US-127. Their first priority would be a four-lane,

at-grade intersection at Isabelle Road and BR-127 with a traffic signal, and completion of a four-lane road with curb and gutter from Broomfield Road south to BR-127.

Mr. Dunn identified the most critical need to be a full interchange located at Broomfield Road or at the south BR-127 exit to accommodate increased traffic demands for Central Michigan University and expansion of the Soaring Eagle Resort. He also recommended the expressway be completed between Ithaca and St. Johns to accommodate all economic growth requirements.

Roger Kessler, M-20 Alliance, also encouraged further development to alleviate traffic by rerouting M-20.

Jack Duso, City of Midland, reported the city and Midland County have worked together to generate funds for several key projects within the city. He noted the city council and the county road commission are in support of a project to connect M-20 on the south with the Stark Road interchange to the north at US-10, and to connect an extension of Airport Road to Stark Road, to help reduce traffic on Eastman and provide a more convenient route through Midland.

Central Michigan University

Jonas Cook, Interim Vice President of Finance & Administrative Services of Central Michigan University, expressed concerns regarding the Broomfield Road Corridor which travels through the campus of Central Michigan University. He requested assistance from the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) in the planning and design process for a roundabout on East Campus Drive, for recommendations to improve safety of pedestrian crossings along the Broomfield corridor, and to secure state intersection improvement funding and enhancement grants for the roundabout project.

Bay Region Update

Kirk Steudle, Bay Region Engineer, updated the Commission on projects within the Bay Region. MDOT continues to work with the M-20 Alliance for the best alignment of M-20 between Remus and US-131. Mr. Steudle provided information on M-20 passing relief lanes, Midland bypass issues, the pros and cons of a Meridian Road connector, the pros and cons of a Stark/Sandow Road connector, and provided information on aesthetics at several locations in the Midland and Gladwin areas. Mr. Steudle will provide further information to the Commission on the status of these issues after further discussions with local agencies.

Director's Report

Director Rosine reported the following. The Department is in the process of conducting interviews to fill vacancies for staff taking advantage of the early-out retirement option. It is expected that the transportation budget, the Airport Safety and Protection Plan program, and the diesel simplification package will be discussed by the Legislature when they return to session on August 13. MDOT continues to work with the industry to resolve performance warranty issues, and the Director noted that there are three upcoming projects which have been identified as performance warranty projects.

Transportation Asset Management

Rick Lilly, Bureau of Transportation Planning, reported that House Bill 5396 was signed into law creating the Transportation Asset Management Council within the State Transportation Commission (STC). The council will develop an asset management strategy for Michigan's federal-aid eligible roads and bridges. Asset management was defined as "an ongoing process of maintaining, upgrading, and operating physical assets cost-effectively, based on a continuous physical inventory and condition assessment." Federal-aid eligible was defined as "any public road or bridge that is eligible for federal-aid to be spent for the construction, repair or maintenance of the particular facility."

Mr. Lilly conveyed that the council was created within the STC because it is a bipartisan body with a statewide perspective, and is the only body that can legally and constitutionally set policy and direct the Michigan Department of Transportation to carry out activities. The STC will appoint members of the council from names submitted by respective organizations, approve the rules of operation, establish an annual budget, and receive an annual report.

The council will consist of 11 members, 10 of which are voting members. The voting members will be appointed for three-year terms and will include two from the County Road Association, two from the Michigan Municipal League, two from the planning and development regions, two from MDOT, one from the Michigan Township Association, and one from the Michigan Association of Counties. The non-voting member will be from the agency that is chosen to house data. MDOT will provide qualified staff and the metropolitan planning organizations will provide technical support.

The mission of the council is "To advise the State Transportation Commission on a statewide asset management strategy and the necessary procedures and analytical tools to implement such a strategy on Michigan's highway system in a cost-effective, efficient manner."

Mr. Lilly provided further information on procedures and requirements for data collection and storage, development of the program and reporting requirements, and budget requirements. He also noted that funding will come from an annual appropriation from the Michigan Transportation Fund (MTF), and data collection must be consistent with all federal regulations

and current accounting practices. The law requires a multi-year road and bridge program and will aid in compliance of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) 34, showing the system is being maintained at the established level.

In summary, the four major benefits of the law include that it will provide a unified approach to effectively managing the highway system, it views the system from the perspective of the driving public rather than individual road agencies, it institutes key recommendations of the Act 51 committee, and it provides a forum for discussing and reaching consensus on key issues in a spirit of cooperation rather than competition.

Mr. Lilly also provided a list of dates that are critical to the asset management council, and asked that the Commission appoint the council members at their August 23, 2002, meeting.

COMMISSION BUSINESS

Commission Minutes

It was moved by Vice Chairman Wahby, with support from Commissioner Garside, to approve the meeting and workshop minutes of June 19, 2002, as submitted. The motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

OVERSIGHT

Commission/State Administrative Board Contracts and Agreements (Exhibit A & Supplemental Exhibit A)

Charles Krupka, Commission Advisor, reported that Item Numbers 6 and 7 of Exhibit A have been withdrawn, and the definition of Item 23 was rewritten because the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) requested MDOT remove their standard reverter clause to comply with DNR procedure. Approval of Item Numbers 1, 2, and 3 of Supplemental Exhibit A is subject to completion of the internal review process.

It was moved by Vice Chairman Wahby, with support from Commissioner Jackson, to grant approval to the Department to proceed with the contract process. The motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

Bid Letting Pre-Approvals (Exhibit A-1)

It was moved by Commissioner Jackson, with support from Vice Chairman Wahby, to grant approval to the Department to proceed with the contract process. The motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

Letting Exceptions (Exhibit A-2)

It was moved by Vice Chairman Wahby, with support from Commissioner Awrey, to grant approval to the Department to proceed with the contract process. The motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

Information Items (Exhibit A-3 & Supplemental Exhibit A-3)

Charlie Krupka reported that Item No. 1 of Supplemental Exhibit A-3 can be deleted as it is a duplicate of Item No. 3 of Exhibit A-3. These items were submitted for information only and do not require Commission approval.

Contract Adjustments

Jim Culp, Bureau of Highway Technical Services, reported on the contract extras and overruns, Exhibit B.

It was moved by Vice Chairman Wahby, with support from Commissioner Awrey, to approve the contract adjustments. The motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

RESOLUTIONS

State Transportation Fund Refunding Bonds

Ed Timpf reported this resolution, which was approved at the June meeting, requires amending for the following two reasons. House Bill 5383 was recently passed amending Act 51 in establishing a uniform definition of "maintenance" and in many places, substitutes the word "preservation" in its place. Secondly, it allows for refunding of two additional bond series, increasing the total amount authorized to be refunded.

The Department requested the Commission adopt this resolution to designate the Director of MDOT as the officer to declare official intent to circulate official statements and authorize the sale of the bonds.

It was moved by Vice Chairman Wahby, with support from Commissioner Jackson, to adopt the resolution as submitted. The motion carried on a unanimous roll-call vote.

Comprehensive Transportation Fund Bonding Resolution

The Department requested the Commission adopt this resolution to designate the Director of MDOT as the officer to declare official intent to circulate official statements and authorize the sale of the State of Michigan Comprehensive Transportation Bonds. These bonds will

fund the Airport Safety and Protection Plan, local public transportation buses and facilities, rail track rehabilitation, rail passenger equipment, Detroit intermodal passenger terminal and the marine passenger terminal.

It was moved by Vice Chairman Wahby, with support from Commissioner Garside, to adopt the resolution as submitted. The motion carried on a unanimous roll-call vote.

POLICY

Commission Policy 10136 (Noise Abatement)

After discussion of the draft noise abatement policy, it was the consensus of the Commission members to make the following changes to the policy. In the second sentence of the sixth paragraph, change “.005 percent” to read “one half of one percent.” In the third sentence of the sixth paragraph, change “20 percent” to “80 percent” and the word “residents” to “residential units.” In the fourth sentence of the sixth paragraph, change “local match of 50 percent” to read “local match of 10 percent.”

The eighth paragraph (Noise Abatement by Others) will be changed to read: “The Commission encourages developers and local governments to coordinate their efforts to mitigate highway noise. This effort must be done without encroachment of MDOT’s property right-of-way unless it is determined to be necessary, and authority granted to permit others to construct a sound barrier in the state’s right-of-way. The barrier’s design must meet MDOT’s geometric, structural, safety and maintenance standards. MDOT shall assume no review authority or responsibility of any kind for the structural integrity or the effectiveness of a sound barrier constructed by others.”

The ninth paragraph will be changed to read: “MDOT will monitor noise mitigation best practices in other states and provide an activity report to the Commission annually.

It was moved by Vice Chairman Wahby, with support from Commissioner Jackson, to adopt Commission Policy 10136 with the noted changes. The motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Larry Shoup, a Northville resident representing families living near I-275, noted his disagreement to the statement in the noise abatement policy that states “This typically occurs when people have somehow contributed to their own problem, usually by moving closer to the highway.” He also expressed concern that sound walls would only be built if the road and

bridge program exceeds \$1 billion, and that total funding levels for noise abatement are being decreased while needs have increased. Mr. Shoup did agree with the term "residents" being changed to "residential units." He also commented that it may be difficult for cities, townships, and counties to change land-use regulations. Mr. Shoup asked that the annual report provided to the Commission also include MDOT's yearly noise mitigation activities.

Sandra Carroll, Livonia resident representing families living near I-275, thanked the Commission and MDOT for improvements made to the I-275 roadway. The longitudinal diamond grinding of I-275 has resulted in lower noise transmissions inside vehicles; however, it is different from the noise transmission from the road surface to adjacent residential homes. Ms. Carroll noted there may be a construction problem with the far right through-lane of northbound I-275, from Five Mile Road to Seven Mile Road, as it appears to be emanating bumpy loud vibrations that are not being experienced in the other traffic lanes. She asked that MDOT review this area as it is the lane closest to the residents. Ms. Carroll also expressed concern that decibel readings taken in this area are not consistent, and even though there has been a reduction in noise levels, the level of noise is still unacceptable to the residents.

Chairman LaBelle asked the Department to review the traffic lane noted by Ms. Carroll to see if there are any inconsistencies, as compared to the other traffic lanes, that can be addressed.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman LaBelle adjourned the meeting at 12:15 p.m.

Commission Advisor